



March 13, 2025

Dr. Katrina Armstrong  
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New York, NY 10027

David Greenwald  
Claire Shipman  
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Dear Dr. Armstrong:

Please consider this a formal response to the current situation on the campus of Columbia University and a follow up to our letter of March 7, 2025, informing you that the United States Government would be pausing or terminating federal funding. Since that date your counsel has asked to discuss “next steps.”

U.S. taxpayers invest enormously in U.S. colleges and universities, including Columbia University, and it is the responsibility of the federal government to ensure that all recipients are responsible stewards of federal funds. Columbia University, however, has fundamentally failed to protect American students and faculty from antisemitic violence and harassment in addition to other alleged violations of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Pursuant to your request, this letter outlines immediate next steps that we regard as a precondition for formal negotiations regarding Columbia University’s continued financial relationship with the United States government. Please ensure and document compliance with the following no later than the close of business on Wednesday, March 20, 2025:

- **Enforce existing disciplinary policies.** The University must complete disciplinary proceedings for Hamilton Hall and encampments. Meaningful discipline means expulsion or multi-year suspension.
- **Primacy of the president in disciplinary matters.** Abolish the University Judicial Board (UJB) and centralize all disciplinary processes under the Office of the President. And

empower the Office of the President to suspend or expel students with an appeal process through the Office of the President.

- **Time, place, and manner rules.** Implement permanent, comprehensive time, place, and manner rules to prevent disruption of teaching, research, and campus life.
- **Mask ban.** Ban masks that are intended to conceal identity or intimidate others, with exceptions for religious and health reasons. Any masked individual must wear their Columbia ID on the outside of their clothing (this is already the policy at Columbia's Irving Medical Center).
- **Deliver plan to hold all student groups accountable.** Recognized student groups and individuals operating as constituent members of, or providing support for, unrecognized groups engaged in violations of University policy must be held accountable through formal investigations, disciplinary proceedings, and expulsion as appropriate.
- **Formalize, adopt, and promulgate a definition of antisemitism.** President Trump's Executive Order 13899 uses the IHRA definition. Anti-"Zionist" discrimination against Jews in areas unrelated to Israel or Middle East must be addressed.
- **Empower internal law enforcement.** The University must ensure that Columbia security has full law enforcement authority, including arrest and removal of agitators who foster an unsafe or hostile work or study environment, or otherwise interfere with classroom instruction or the functioning of the university.
- **MESAAS Department – Academic Receivership.** Begin the process of placing the Middle East, South Asian, and African Studies department under academic receivership for a minimum of five years. The University must provide a full plan, with date certain deliverables, by the March 20, 2025, deadline.
- **Deliver a plan for comprehensive admissions reform.** The plan must include a strategy to reform undergraduate admissions, international recruiting, and graduate admissions practices to conform with federal law and policy.

We expect your immediate compliance with these critical next steps, after which we hope to open a conversation about immediate and long-term structural reforms that will return Columbia to its original mission of innovative research and academic excellence.

Sincerely,



Josh Gruenbaum  
Comm'r of the Fed. Acquisition Serv.  
General Services Administration



Thomas E. Wheeler  
Acting General Counsel  
U.S. Dept. of Education



Sean R. Keveney  
Acting General Counsel  
U.S. Dep't Health & Human Servs.